

PUPIL TRANSPORTATION NEWS

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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Tip

When parking the bus at the end of the day place a plastic bag over crossover mirrors to prevent frost or ice build-up at night. This will cause less scraping when doing the pre-trip.

—Lisa Ballard, Daviess County

Be sure to take the plastic bags off before you drive.

State changes to CDL

As of January 1, 2016, the Kentucky Division of Driver Licensing will no longer accept any physical dated for more than one year for anyone carrying the "S" endorsement.

If a driver presents a physical card with an expiration date of more than a year, it will be rejected and they will have to return to the

medical examiner for a new card. It is "up to the driver to notify the examiner" that they only want a one year physical. *No exceptions will be allowed.* This is in response to KRS 281A.175 and the responsibility of the Department of Transportation, Driver Licensing Division to enforce that law.

Driver Database

Thank you from KDE for cleaning up the driver database. It went from over 1,800 drivers with missing/expired data to less than 2 people per day. Monica and Debra are still making daily calls on any drivers who are in the database. With this being said, please check the database daily to ensure you don't have anyone entered who is not certified to drive a school bus. Remember, until all drivers' information is entered into the driver database they are not certified. It is the driver trainer's responsibility to keep on top of this.

"Is it illegal for my child to stand on a school bus?"

Per 702 KAR 5:030 Section 12. In route planning and purchasing or contracting for school buses, a district shall work toward providing a sufficient number of school buses to allow each student a seated position that affords the occupant protected compartmentalization and complies with 702 KAR 5:080, Section 11.



So technically, no it is not illegal for a child to stand, but each district shall work towards the students sitting as quickly as possible. We have heard many districts making changes immediately and we thank you for that! Encourage your drivers to continue to let you know when there is a seating issue. You can't fix it if you don't know about it.

Texting and cell phone use while driving a KY school bus prohibited

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, (FMCSA) has published rules that restrict **texting** and the use of hand-held mobile phones by truck and bus drivers while operating a commercial motor vehicle (CMV).

Research commissioned by FMCSA shows the odds of being involved in a safety-critical event are **23.2 times greater for CMV drivers who text while driving than for those who do not**. Texting drivers took their eyes off the forward roadway for an average of 4.6 seconds. At 55 mph, this equates to a driver traveling 371 feet, or the approximate length of a football field (including the end zones) – without looking at the roadway!

What exactly is “Texting”?

Texting means manually entering text into, or reading text from, an electronic device.

What does this rule mean to you?

Fines and Penalties – Texting while driving can result in driver disqualification. Penalties can be up to \$2,750 for drivers and up to \$11,000 for employers who allow or re-

quire drivers to use a hand-held communications device for texting while driving.



What are the risks? – Texting is risky because it causes the driver to take his/her eyes off the roadway. Dispatching devices that are part of a fleet management system can be used for other purposes, but texting on a dispatching device is indistinguishable from texting on another text-capable device, and is therefore prohibited.

Kentucky

KRS 281A.205 restricts the use of cell phones by Kentucky School Bus Drivers.

A person shall not operate a school bus, as defined in KRS 281A.010, on any high-

way while **using a cellular telephone** while the bus is in motion and transporting one (1) or more children, except for communications made to and from a central dispatch, school transportation department, or its equivalent when the bus is not equipped with a functioning two (2) way radio.

No Call, No Text, No Ticket!

Bus Stop policies reminder

Every year, when school starts, we receive calls about school bus stops and what the law says. There are very few laws that govern school bus stops in Kentucky. It is up to the local district to determine the best and safest stop for students.

Districts need to work with the driver trainer instructor in developing safe and efficient routing of buses, determine when adjustments are necessary and the best way to make these adjustments.

Determine travel time for students, walking distance to bus stops, bus time schedules, students to be picked up by each bus and hazardous walking areas. There is no minimum or maximum

walking distance required by the state. This must be determined by the school district, keeping in mind the age/grade of the students. It is best practice to have travel time for students and walking distance to bus stops into board policy. Along with this, make sure the

parents responsibility of getting the children to and from the school bus stop is written in policy.

Although providing transportation for students is not a requirement, districts do it

because they know that it is the safest way to get students back and forth to school and without the big yellow school bus, many students would not be able to attend school.



With this being said, we need to have shared responsibility with the county, parents and districts. Parents need to understand that door-to-door service is not required and changes may be made next school year. Districts should work with the county to make more centralized bus stops and encourage communities to work together with monitoring the stop. If there are not sufficient turn arounds, the county can help with this.

We are finding many school districts are lacking direction for some very basic areas. Reviewing what you have in place will help your district in the future. Directors, please review the Planning Bus Routes section of the Pupil Transportation Management Manual for a refresher on the subject.

NHTSA has a guide for School Transportation Professionals on selecting school bus stop locations. It can be found at <http://www.nhtsa.gov/School-Buses>.

Lewis. Co. student wins second place in contest

Callie Lykens, Lewis County Central Elementry, placed second in the National Association for Pupil Transportation Poster contest for Division 2, Grades 3-5. Prominent individuals in the field of pupil transportation evaluated all the posters during the annual NAPT Conference & Trade Show. They were judged on the relationship of the poster design to the school bus safety practices, originality of the poster and how the idea is expressed in the poster design, artwork and its execution, and the visual impact of the poster design.

She will receive a \$100 check from NAPT.
Congratulations Callie!



2016 NAPT Poster Contest underway

The Kentucky Department of Education, Pupil Transportation Program, will be sponsoring the 2016 State School Bus Safety Poster Contest. The contest will be open from September 1, 2015 to May 1, 2016.

All students enrolled in elementary or middle school (plus high school for Division 4 and 5 only), may participate. A **local selection committee, to include the transportation department**, established in each school system or district shall select from all local applicants a finalist whose **application must be postmarked to the Kentucky Department of Education, Pupil Transportation, no later than May 1, 2016**. Only **one** poster for each category from each school system or district will be judged at state level. The poster **must** have the 2016 theme “**# STOP ON RED!**” to **qualify**. **Applications shall not be submitted to the state by student applicants**. Posters will not be returned.

Please be sure to read the instructions carefully. The slogan must be, “**#STOP ON RED!**” Completed poster size must be 11” x 17” or 12” x 18”. Posters may be illustrated on the vertical or horizontal axis. Designs should be submitted on quality tag, poster illustration board or heavy paper. Construction paper may be used but winning entries must be mounted on quality tag poster. Lamination is not permitted, and will disqualify the poster.

The posters will be reviewed for eligibility and will be voted on by the attendees of the transportation conferences held by Student Transportation Association of Kentucky and Kentucky Association for Pupil Transportation.

The winners of each category will be sent to the National Association for Pupil Transportation (NAPT) National Contest. The winner will be chosen during the NAPT Conference and Trade Show and used to promote the 2017 National School Bus Safety Week.

KDE will be accepting posters which comply with the National School Bus Safety Poster Contest Rules. These can be found on the NAPT website at <http://napt.org/resources/national-school-bus-safety-week.php>.

Mail eligible entries to:

The Kentucky Department of Education
Pupil Transportation
500 Mero Street, 15th Floor CPT
Frankfort, KY 40601

Good Luck! We can't wait to see what the students come up with!

Funding and efficiency

Recently, at the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) Board Meeting, the question of school bus efficiency was mentioned. Transportation needs more money, but the Board wants to know that each district is being efficient in the funding they currently have. The KBE will be requesting additional funding for transportation, but know that your departments will be looked at much closer and questions are going to be asked. I encourage you to know and understand your districts

numbers. Look at your departments and see where you can become more efficient. Some things to consider are: Do you have an inventory program? Are you monitoring fuel electronically? Is your parts area organized and parts are only ordered when needed? Is your process for field trips efficient? Can you save just by modernizing this process? Are you routing in such a way that the school bus is not stopping at every house?

What has your district done, whether

it is big or small, to become more efficient? Please share, so that we can share with leadership what is being done.

If you would like to hear the board's discussion, please go to <http://mediaportal.education.ky.gov/leadership/kentucky-board-of-education/2015/10/kentucky-board-of-education-meeting-1062015/>. The transportation conversation starts at 3:15 and goes through 3:50. The topic is discussed again later in the day.

Routing efficiencies

How can a district become more efficient with routing? A district can improve efficiency of routes by consolidation, re-routing, or extensions. Some districts have taken a look at double routing while others have purchased larger buses to consolidate routes. Some districts have gone even further to look at all day preschool and changing bell times, which has saved them a lot of money.

It is very important that a district take a look at their routes and spend some time planning. Many districts have gone to route planning software, but what works for one district may not be ideal for another. Districts need to take a look at their policies for bus routes. If you are doing door side service, is it necessary? In some cases it may be, but in most cases, there is room to consolidate stops or have centralized bus stops.

Note: Funding is based on students who are transported one (1) mile or more to/from school.

The Kentucky Career Center and recruiting assistance

We all know there is a shortage of school bus drivers in Kentucky and nationwide. KDE is looking into options for districts. Over the next few months, we hope to be able to share additional resources. If there is something your district is doing that might help another district, please share!

The Kentucky Career Center (KCC) can assist employers with a myriad of employment recruitment functions. KCC staff can facilitate recruitment by posting job vacancies, screening potential applicants, providing pre-employment assessments, as well as offering office space for on-site interviews. KCC staff also host job fairs and specialized recruiting events. When job fairs are hosted by KCC locations, school districts are encouraged to participate and recruit for their staffing needs.

We met with KCC Bluegrass, which serves 17 counties in the Bluegrass Region. In order to utilize their services, you must post your district's position on <https://focustalent.ky.gov>. If you are interested in other services, contact your local career center or workforce development agency for additional assistance. To see all resources available, please visit www.ckycareers.com under Business Services to see a list of all the resources. Their marketing coordinator does a great job using Facebook and Twitter to get any new information out that is posted.

There are different regions and each region may have different resources. To find an office near you, please go to <http://kcc.ky.gov/Office/Locations.aspx#info>. You can click on your district and then the Kentucky Career Center link above the address for the county.



Loading and unloading precautions

Each year we read or hear about children from across the country who are hurt or killed during the school bus loading and/or unloading process. We thought we would include a few incidents contained in the National Loading and Unloading Survey from the past five years to emphasize this point:

- On a dark, rainy evening, a 17-year-old was being taken home following her after-school program. The bus had activated the stop arm and flashing lights. When the girl was walking across in front of the bus, a car approaching from the front failed to stop. The girl was struck and killed by the passing vehicle.
- An 11-year-old boy had crossed the road, but he realized he had dropped something. The driver did not see the boy when he went back to get what he had dropped. The bus struck and killed him with the left front wheels of the bus.
- An 11-year-old girl was struck and killed by the right rear wheels of the school bus while she was crossing the road. She was on her way home.
- A 12-year-old boy was struck and killed by the right front wheels of the school bus while attempting to board the bus. The sister boarded the bus and was walking back to her seat. She had told the driver that her brother was riding the bus. The driver started the bus moving forward when he hit something. He thought it was a dog until he backed up and saw the boy laying on the road.
- A 7-year-old girl was waiting at the bus stop next to a large mail box. The driver activated the amber lights, but never came to a complete stop because he didn't see anyone. The girl thought the driver was stopping the bus, so she stepped in front of the bus as the driver accelerated. She was struck and killed by the left front tire. The driver was reported to have made five more stops before he was notified by radio that a child had been hit. The accident happened before sunrise.

- A 5-year-old male kindergarten student had exited the bus in a heavy rain and was crossing in front of the bus to his home. The stop arm was out and the lights were flashing when a pickup approaching from the opposite direction failed to stop and struck and killed him.
- An 8-year-old male was crossing the road to board his bus. The driver of an approaching vehicle stated that the bus had the amber lights flashing, but she was plugging in her cell phone. By the time she saw the boy, it was too late and she struck and killed him. It was still dark out.
- A 10-year-old male was fatally struck by a school bus. The boy tripped and fell as he tried to catch the morning bus. He was attempting to crawl out from under the bus when he was run over by the left rear dual wheels.

According to the 2014-15 National School Loading and Unloading Survey:

- ▶ During the past 45 years the largest percentage of fatalities, 73.2% (897 fatalities), occurred to students 1-9 years of age.
- ▶ In 2013-2014, students departing from the bus or on their way home involved 30% of all fatalities.
- ▶ 40% of fatalities were attributed to the school bus. Those involving "other vehicle," were 60% for 2013-2014.

Points of Emphasis:

Scan your mirrors and surrounding area

- ▷ before stopping,
- ▷ during stop,
- ▷ before opening the door,
- ▷ before loading/unloading,
- ▷ after loading/unloading,
- ▷ after closing the door,
- ▷ before departing

Count your students both while on the bus and off the bus to ensure you know where they are located

Winter weather conditions

Basic seasonal driving tips:

- Slow down.
- Accelerate gently and steer smoothly.
- Carefully test your brakes and steering at a very low speed.
- Utilize controlled braking.
- Allow extra time and distance margins.
- Slow down before curves and corners.
- Go down hills in a lower gear (ice, ruts, etc.).
- Avoid passing unless necessary and then proceed with caution.

On your route if you suspect icing conditions:

- Slow down gradually.

- Avoid aggressive braking or steering.
- Turn on headlights, strobe lights, 4-way flashers.
- Double your following distance.
- Give others a lane
- Practice defensive driving.

Beware of snow drifts There may be hazards in the snow drift (solid objects or previously plowed and now frozen snow). Whenever possible, avoid them.

Anticipate limited visibility. Watch snow banks along the side of the road. Remind students to stay off the snow banks when waiting for the school bus. Turns may be more difficult when snow banks limit visibility.

Driver Trainer Instructor Workshops

Registration is now open for the 2016 Driver Trainer Instructor Workshops to be held in Frankfort. There are four scheduled with a capacity of 24 per class. All registrations must be submitted through Eventbrite and the links are provided below. In the case of high demand, districts may be limited on the number of candidates they can send so we may provide spots for all districts needing to have someone trained.

DTI #1 – April 4-8, 2016

DTI #2 – June 14-17, 2016

DTI #3 – July 12-15, 2016

DTI #4 – July 26-29, 2016

T-Codes

If you have not done so already, remember to check your T-Codes periodically throughout the year to ensure they are correct. This is directly related to your funding. During the last KAPT Seminar on Finance a district asked, “What do we code a student who lives within one mile of school,

but is transported on a bus for over two miles?” If it would take a mile or more to transport the child over a safe and normal route to school then they would be coded as a T-1. A district can’t reroute the bus to simply extend the distance to over one mile.

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